SPECTRUM OF CIRCLES

BLACK / THRASH METAL FANZINE
14 / 2024

VITRIOLIC
MAYHEMIC
TETRASIGIL
KAUHU

And in the master's chambers they gathered for the feast

Spectrum of Circles # 1, December 2023: Aedes, Itsesaastutus, Kova Totuus, Morbific.

Spectrum of Circles # 2, December 2023: Gorekaust, Lähdön Aika, Hekatoxen, Sonic Poison

Spectrum of Circles # 3, February 2024: Soul Incursion, True Grit, Disguised Malignance, Castrated Youth

Spectrum of Circles # 4, March 2024: Hoc est Bellum, Below the Graves, Grave with a View, Skepticism

Spectrum of Circles # 5, March 2024: Azatoth, Sulfuric Cautery, Thin Line, Sacred Crucifix

Spectrum of Circles # 6, April 2024: Health Issues, Sequestrum, Cerebrum, Baron + Bloodlands, Fury of Livez

Spectrum of Circles # 7, April 2024: Taser, Gutrefaxion, Kuvotus, Ilon Lapset

Spectrum of Circles # 8, May 2024: Whisper, Haudat, Cryptic Hatred, Gray State

Spectrum of Circles # 9, July 2024: Praise, Guts, Kaivs, Sentenced

Spectrum of Circles # 10, August 2024: Necrotic Ooze, Omnivortex, No Exceptions, Savage Gospel

Spectrum of Circles # 11, September 2024: Malformed, Absolute Key, Sewer Altar, Askel

Spectrum of Circles # 12, October 2024: Cryptorium, Bombardement, Phrenetix, Thorium, Abhorration

Spectrum of Circles # 13, November 2024: Vvorse, Haexler, Uhritoimitus, Rotten Sound, Cold Inside

Contact

Web: spectrumofcircles.blogspot.com
https://archive.org/details/@tawastian_tower_productions

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61554891802844

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/spectrumofcircles/

Email: tawastian.tower@gmail.com

Ads: We are not looking for any ads, but stuff that aligns with the contents of Spectrum of Circles can be considered. Please contact us for further information.

Photo and artwork credits (where available)

Front artwork: National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), licensed under Creative Commons BY 2.0 license
Vitriolic: Panu Räsänen (live)
Tetrasigil: I.K. Inho

Playlist

Accept – Restless and Wild
Green Tea – Owl Arcana
Impaled Nazarene – Ugra-Karma
Impiety – Kaos Kommand 696
Incapacitants – As Loud as Possible
Incriminated – Kings of Misery
Iron Maiden - Seventh Son of a Seventh Son & No Prayer for the Dying
Kent – Vapen & ammunition
Kreator – Endless Pain & Pleasure to Kill
Joulupukin juhannusyö: M.A. Nummisen ja hänen ystäviensä joululauluja
Malediction - Chronicles of Dissention
Mausoleum - Cadaveric Displays of Ghoulish Ghastliness
Metal Gear 2: Solid Snake OST
Night in the Woods OST
Satanic Warmaster - Fimbulwinter
The Sisters of Mercy – Smoke and Mirrors

Editorial

"I am death incarnate!"

Cough cough

After publishing a new issue of Spectrum it usually takes a week or two before I get to work with the next issue. It's usually first pieces of this editorial. As I'm writing these first lines, it's early December 2024... two pieces of chocolate consumed from the advent calendar. Preparing for the feast... It's been almost a year since the first Spectrum came out, and now this is the editorial for the fourteenth issue. Figures...

Fast forward to later days of December and we're had this issue finished! The interviews themselves were finished long before even the previous issue came out, it just took time to put it all together... and while the process for Spectrum of Circles is pretty streamlined, it always deserves the fullest attention I can give to it. And that's where life gets in the way.

Having a lot to balance in the daily nine-to-five routines (to an exceptional proportions during the last quarter of the year), Christmas season (It'd be highly pretentious of me to claim I do not celebrate Christmas in any way) and contracting a contagious disease (mine's not exactly featured on the cover, but I can't help it that Mycobacterium tuberculosis looks way more cooler than Streptococcus pneumoniae) certainly slows things down for a while... and also videos games; Wolfenstein series, Bioshock Infinite, F1 2017, Rally-Sport, and Night in the Woods, in particular. Especially the latter's soundtrack has been playing while compiling this issue, with most of the work was done in a matter of days in late December. Just like what happened with the second issue.

So, what we do have here? As opposed to grindcorish/crusty 13th issue, we have now started our journey towards Hell. Again, it wasn't actually intentional to have this percentage of black metal, but it aligns with my listening habits, more or less. Apart from Mayhemic, all of these bands have connections to Tampere.

And yeah, there's the annual "Best of but not in any specific order and with no exact limitations either" list of those releases that resonated with me the most. Obviously I have forgotten something and there's quite a lot stuff in that infamous "bubbling under" phase, most notably "Burning in Celestial Poison" by Black Curse. Well, let's march into 2025 and take note how many 2024 or 2023 albums we are listening and making adjustments to our "Top 10 best" lists over time.

December 2024
-J

Ps. RIP Heikki Silvennoinen

Pss. Yes there is a hidden message in here.

Psss. UP THE IRONS!

"How long, on this longest Friday
'Til we finally make it through?"

"My goal is to write, with vitriol and fury, of the faustian man – who is always more than willing to choose Evil and to stomp everyone and everything in his path to lay the road towards Hell. "

Satanic. Speed. Metal. There's not much more to that, and that's how Vitriolic's engine roars. If that doesn't convince you, then I can't say what does. Those captions? Yeah, they might give you an idea what this three-piece band is all about.

Greetings. What's happening in the Vitriolic camp?

Gatekeeper Ares: Our second album 'Black Steel Vengeance' has just been released on CD and tape via Headsplit records. Besides that, we are rehearsing, playing gigs and making new material.

What was your initial idea of Vitriolic's approach to music, aesthetic and spirit? Have those ideas been refined or redefined during the course of Vitriolic's existence? Were there any certain artists you found particularly inspiring?

GA: The idea of Vitriolic has been pretty clear from the beginning. I had been thinking of starting a band that plays heavy metal infused black metal trio and after toying with the idea for some time around 2019. I had played with V von Vitriolic in a band before and knew him to be a helluva drummer, so when he stumbled one drunken night to the door of the bar where I just do bouncer work, I presented him my idea and things started to roll pretty fast. Irreverentor, whom I knew back from Huoripukki, was asked to join on bass after a couple of rehearsals.

From the beginning we have wanted to play fast and powerful metal that emanates might and vitriol and we have found inspiration in bands like Venom, Nifelheim and Deströyer 666 - which have nothing to do with the contemporary finnish black metal shit that dwells in melancholy and self pity. I want to grit my teeth from adrenaline, not from second hand embarrassment. So we are marching the well traveled roads towards Hell, yet with our own strong vision.

V von Vitriolic: When GA asked me to come to play speed metal I was instantly sold. I did not have any band at that time to really challenge me as a drummer so I was and am very excited about this band. It's been a magnificent ride to search for your own true potential as a drummer and evolve along the journey.

Mercyful Fate, Nifelheim and Absu are the first bands that come to my mind when I start to think about bands that were inspiring to me as a drummer at the beginning. Also from the start to this day the most inspiring drummers for me and guiding my drumming path in Vitriolic are Steve Asheim and Nils Fjellström. Total maniacs behind The kit.

You have operated as a three-piece band since the start, I presume? Have you managed with the current lineup, or has the expansion into four-piece band ever crossed your mind?

GA: The idea of being a power trio has been since the inception of the band and I see no reason to change it. As a trio its really easy to sound good live and if somebody messes something it's handy to "lean in". And besides those it's nice when managing gig dates and rehearsals isn't a pain in the ass. Beside some backing guitars under solos and a few simple harmonies, the songs are built with one guitar in mind. So I see no need for expanding.

V: This vehicle (toyota) rides with three wheels full speed to hell! No need for extra tires.

Speaking of the lineup, how closely-knit unit Vitriolic is? What would happen if one of you would decide to leave the band?

GA: I'd say we are pretty tight as a band. We have been doing this together with clear vision for half a decade now and everyone has found their own duties within this unit of ours. We are more than the sum of our parts, so it seems hard to imagine a future for the band without the three of us. And it's been a blast to play in a band where everyone is for once on the same page and motivated.

V: This is one of the best parts of our trio "to play in a band where everyone is for once on the same page and motivated". It inspires a lot when all in the band are as devoted as yourself.

You march under the banner of Satanic Speed Metal. That really sums up what Vitriolic is about, and it's also the title of a classic Deströyer 666 track. My all-time favorite of them, to be exact. Is that a direct reference to that song? Has that particular song affected you... how much?

GA: Well like you said - it sums up what we are about. And yeah we have found inspiration from Deströyer and other Australian bands. One of the most memorable gigs I've seen was when Deströyer played in Pellava Rock something like 15 years ago (Yeah, I was there, too. -Ed.). The titular track is great, which encapsulates much of what I think metal is about and 'Satanic Speed Metal' is a fitting banner to march under, but Vitriolic isn't some sort of worship band. With similar ingredients you end up with similar results.

V: Satanic speed metal describes us perfectly. It contains the very ingredients that you can hear about in our music, speed, thrash and black metal.

How important it is to follow the certain musical vision? How about deviating from that vision? Do you feel you have all the liberty in the world to do what thou wilt?

GA: We set out with pretty straight forward lines of what

we were going to do, so you could say we have a somewhat clear vision. I'd argue that Heavy Metal in general, especially the genres set in stone around 80's and 90's don't offer too much liberty of what you can do. But Vitriolic isn't exactly about making groundbreaking musical discoveries – more like breaking your face. Of course we are in liberty to do what we want with our music, but who says we aren't doing just that? Boundaries aren't always a prison and often it's better to have some sort of limits, total freedom has a tendency to make you a prisoner of unlimited choice.

But like I said, there's a somewhat limited room to wiggle in. You can always start another project if you wanna do something else But. I'd say that for example on "Black Steel Vengeance" there is in the end varied songwriting in the given limits. And even if there isn't groundbreaking stuff happening, there is always the craftsman's pride of doing it well, whatever you are doing.

Do you need to set rules to your songwriting? Do you have to rule some riffs and even songs out on "this sound too much like something" basis or by some similar rules? Does Vitriolic take influences from other musical genres?

GA: Of course there are some sonic boundaries on what is a Vitriolic song, but there are no set rules that we have to follow. Often the songs have been born from trying to invent some sorta 'Iron Maiden melody' and smash riffs into it. There have been moments of realization of 'oh fuck, this sounds like this or that' and its back to drawing board. Sometimes it's been too late for that, but all riffs and melodies have already been done, so who gives a fuck in the end? Lately we have moved more towards working on the songs together in the rehearsal room, where we play with the songs and shoot down each other's ideas and start work on the good ones. And I'd say it's pretty great that you can work like that.

In the past I've written most of the songs for that band and while I enjoy a lot of prog rock and post-punk along with metal for example, I'd say it would be a stretch or posing to say that there are something like Jethro Tull, Camel, Bowie or Bauhaus influences on our music. Although I challenge you to find a Ted Nugent riff from the new album! But I'd say there is a touch of punk in Vitriolic - like there should be in all metal, GIVE ME D-BEAT OR GIVE ME DEATH!

V: On drums I can say it was stated in some early rehearsal that "no samba" so I left all too progressive MGLA style kilikatikikka away. I can fool around with drums on other projects. Lots of traditional blast beats, double pedals and d-beats fit perfectly in our songs, no need to reinvent battery sections, just pure crushing on set.

Vitriolic's image relies heavily on the classic leather, spikes, bullets and rudimentary corpsepaint aesthetic. How important it is to have a image? How much you foster and give thought to it?

GA: What do you mean rudimentary corpse paint? Only black corpse paint is real! Of course image and showmanship have their place in heavy metal and every band has some sort of image, even those who choose anonymity. Old pictures of Destruction, Motörhead and Sarcofago have burned into my brain and are what in my opinion this kinda band should look like. So the visual side has been pretty obvious from the get go. Venom and Saxon laid down the law a long time ago for metal – Leather, Denim and Hell! On how much we foster our image, I'd say the fact that we have been able to produce one or two promopics in five years tells you enough.

V: We made a second full-length and a few demos at that time when we had been talking about taking new band pics...

Speaking of image, you also use pseudonyms, which is not the case with the other bands you are active with. Is this yet another mean to distinguish Vitriolic from those bands?

GA: It felt right and in some cases pseudonyms add to the magic of mystique of bands - who wouldn't have wondered who the fuck are 'Three Black Hearts of Darkness and Impurity', 'Death Dealer' or 'Nuclear Holocausto Vengence'? And like I said, it doesn't hurt to have a bit of showmanship instead of just going "Jarno - guitar, Pasi - drums". Different bands have different needs and ways of projecting their ideas.

V: I have always used pseudonyms in different bands and projects so it was clear from the start that we use them. Just like GA said if there is "Jarno – guitar" it just eats away all the showmanship you can have. If Jarno plays guitar and steps on a stage with gasoline smelling sneakers and cap, it doesn't matter to me how good he plays. I'm out of there. And yes I am indicating that if band members are named Jarno or Pasi that usually shows on stage as well, not even trying to bet on aesthetics.

> "People brag about how they play only for themselves, but they are liars. Art – if we want to even use this term here, needs someone to perceive it. Even the bands that never play live release their music into the world and have some sort of audience."

How about the lyrical depth of Vitriolic's songs? Is there a such depth to them, or is their purpose to meet up with the perception of the idea what satanic speed metal should live up to?

GA: I've written all the lyrics and there is – at least an effort of depth. I'm not interested in singing about raping nuns or assholes of goats or some other juvenile shit like that. That doesn't mean that I wouldn't enjoy Impnaz or Goatlord, but they have their thing and we have ours. Lyrics are somewhat of a necessary evil and often they are done the last, I feel more comfortable in writing riffs than playing a poet. But if something needs to be done, it's better to try to do it well. Just like with the music there's an idea of what they should be like. My goal is to write, with vitriol and fury, of the faustian man – who is always more than willing to choose Evil and to stomp everyone and everything in his path to lay the road towards Hell.

Like I said, the texts are sometimes the hardest part to get done, so I keep notebooks where I write stuff up when they pop into my head – or even better when there is something to steal, so that there is some raw material to work with when the time comes. There are a lot of traces of books I've read and movies I've watched in the texts. Everything from Shakesphere to Rocky III and Bas Rutten has been used. I find inspiration from history, religion, martial arts and esotericism. For example I wrote the lyrics to 'Crown of Fire' while I was working on a degree in theology and got an idea to combine the higher magical ritual anointing of Christ to the lower

contemporary ritual of necklacing. A sort of textual reverse alchemy of turning something golden into shit. The most inspiring metal lyrics and texts to strive towards that come to mind are 'Genesis to Genocide' and 'Quintessence'.

There are some bands that share the similar outlook on life and metal. Do you follow any bands wih similar direction or feel kinship with them? Do you feel you're part of any certain movement, or a scene?

GA: Hard to feel kinship for people that I don't know personally. There are many good bands and good people that we have met and whom we know personally from the Finnish underground circles – like Scumripper, Rapid, Vulkan Grit, Bonehunter, DET, Axeslaughter, Sickness, Vincent Revenge, Sadokist, trio era Morgal was great... Often it's easier to see what you are not part of than to dissect what you are and how that is expressed than what you are – we play black metal, but I don't see much of a connection with the Finnish black metal scene and us. Seems like the black metal crowd love their safe spaces and don't even come to gigs, if they aren't labeled "black metal". For years the Finnish consensus black metal has been so goddamn boring, that I've haven't had any interest in it. Maybe there is a sort of change of guard in the air as the black legions aping bands are getting old. Of course there are interesting releases from time to time, like the Apogeion's first album or Arnault Pavle's second offering. (Both of those are recommended by the Spectrum of Circles headquarters. -Ed.)

V: Also have to mention a few other great bands from the underground that we have shared stage with: Poisoner and Cadaverous Night. Great dudes and killer songs by both, I recommend.

Your first full-length album "Renegade Ascension" was released in 2021, CD and tape version were released by Headsplit Records. After that you have published a couple of demos by yourselves. What's the motive behind this move, given the fact that the new album is going to be published thru Headsplit again? A mean to just do something by yourselves for the sake of doing something by yourselves, or a fun way to improve and "test" Vitriolic and to see where it's going.

GA: "Renegade Ascension" was also released as a 12" by Ostrobothnian Sound Systems (RIP). Demos and albums are different things and It's refreshing to set up a 4-tracker and record something raw and in the moment, instead of making an album. In the end we always do things pretty much DIY, so if we record with a Fostex or with a DAW, it's done in our Nekala Dungeons bunker. Of course albums take more effort and time and have a cleaner sound.

Being a band is actively doing something – and between albums I find it interesting to put out demos and like you said, they are a good way for improvement and testing out stuff. And I like to put out something rawer, it offers another perspective on the material, and I like the rawer sound in general. I don't understand why you would need a label for everything you do? Like nowadays bands seem to release "demos" through labels. It's usually somewhat of a hassle and takes time. Nothing wrong with dubbing tapes and xeroxing for your hearts delight.

Those two demos are certainly harsher in execution than your full-length albums, even going as far as monentarily sounding like two entirely different bands? Do you think there's a considerable gap between the "rehearsal room Vitriolic" and "semi-professional studio band Vitriolic"? Do you face these ordeals differently?

GA: It's the same band, it's just rawer and probably encapsulates better the way we sound live. It's hard to see a gap, as the "semi-professional studio version" of the band, when the recordings have been mostly done in our rehearsal room. Of course it probably seems different from the outside, but whatever the manifestation of the band is, it is forged in the rehearsal room. Even on the albums we have tried to keep things pretty close to the live sound. There are doubling on the guitars and vocals and some comping under the some solos, but that's it.

Do you view Vitriolic more as a live band or a creative force that prospers in studio? Creation or performance?

V: Live band absolutely! As I recall it was one of the first things that was clear from day one that we will play live as much as possible.

GA: I agree. Music is to be played live and especially fast and violent metal gets on another level when it is performed live. Of course there are pretty big exceptions in the monoliths of black metal, when it comes to playing live, but I have a hard time to see why you wouldn't play live. People brag about how they play only for themselves, but they are liars. Art – if we want to even use this term here, needs someone to perceive it. Even the bands that never play live release their music into the world and have some sort of audience. At the same time, it doesn't mean that we wouldn't be playing in our cellar even if no one wouldn't be interested.

I think it's justified to say that Vitriolic is really active as a band, given the fact we have seen at least one new Vitriolic release unleash upon us annually. Do you see yourselves as active as you might appear to someone who's not within the band's direct sphere of influence?

GA: We train weekly and try to always be working on some new material and play gigs and so on, so yeah you could say we are pretty active. I find it somewhat weird that bands decline to play live on the basis that they are working on new material or something like that. Maybe they have just been politely saying no to my gig offers. But as long as there is inspirational momentum I think it's wise to use it and often it seems to be a somewhat self fueling fire when you get it going.

Given the length of your discography, what is your favorite Vitriolic work so far? And why that particular piece of work?

V: Definitely the latest full-length "BLACK STEEL VENGEANCE". Drum sounds are topnotch and at last some roto-toms on record. Also we have worked much more around these songs at our rehearsal place so I think these have more touch by all of us as a band.

GA: At the moment the new album feels like the epitome of what we have done so far. Kinda standard answer that bands give is that the last album is the best, but on BSV the songs are full of force, speed and darkness! I think we have refined our sound on every release, but they are all pretty consistent.

On the other hand, are there any... regrets? Something you might now feel you could have done better in some way?

V: Could have been faster... but no regrets! It was what it was back then.

GA: I have no regrets concerning our recordings, the first demo sounds pretty slow nowadays, but other than that the recordings reflect the band pretty well in the given time and there hasn't been any sort of wimping out.

What other bands do you have beside Vitriolic? Huoripukki is naturally one of them, but I recall Gatekeeper Ares having this Crypt Lord project with an entirely different approach to black metal, music and synths.

V: At the moment I play Drums in a few bands Cathedral Stivhet and Viha. CS is more Doom rockish stuff and Viha leans more to traditional Black metal so a very different style of drumming than in Vitriolic and both of these bands are more on hiatus than active.

I have my solo project Ancient Hatred which is more like GA earlier said "contemporary finnish black metal shit that dwells in melancholy and self pity" Haha. Also we just played our last show ever with Saturnian Mist where I have been playing percussion for the past 9 years.

GA: Huoripukki is pretty much disbanded and continues as a paramilitary unit. Crypt Lord is my synthesizer driven Black Metal band that draws inspiration from Beherit's first electric albums. It hasn't released anything in years, but I have been thinking about doing new material for awhile now. At least there have been some CL gigs, so there is some activity concerning that project. I also play guitar in Hekatoxen which plays old school Finnish death metal (Spectrum of Circles issue three. -Ed.) and beat bass in Warfare Noise. Both of them should be putting out new material in 2025, so stay tuned!

What are your most preferred ways to consume music? A physical media or digital streams? Should they even matter as of 2024?

GA: Kinda sickening to think that music is about consuming, but it seems that we live in an age where being a person is to be a consuming drone. I prefer physical media – vinyls and tapes mostly, my apartment is so cramped that I've had to put CD's away in the basement – although sometimes they are taken out to die in the car. It's nice that you can listen to anything you want by streaming, but it's so much easier to pick a record from a limited collection on the shelves. And it feels more real. I like to have a collection of records, books and movies, even if I'm not much of a hoarder, but there is no resting the consuming impulse... Nowadays people seem to be under the illusion that everything is and will be available and their beloved works of art will stay available or can you even be sure they stay the same in the future? So I like to collect things that I feel I need to have on my shelf now and in the future.

"Satanic speed metal describes us perfectly. It contains the very ingredients that you can hear about in our music, speed, thrash and black metal."

V: Mostly I listen to music on youtube or spotify but I prefer to listen on vinyl, cd or cassette if possible. I still buy physical Cd's and Cassettes. Vinyl is the best format even though I don't have a lot of them and my vinyl player is broken at the moment.

What is your preferred medium to publish your own work? Your work has been published in all of the most important mediums utilized in underground metal... CD, cassette, vinyl, digital...

V: Vinyl. Vinyl has the most to jump on and admire, especially when the cover arts are spot on.

GA: Yeah, the black wax is the best. And tapes. They have the most fetishistic qualities. A digital release is nothing and feels like nothing when it is just a few clicks away.

What kind of music you have been listening to lately? Any recommendations?

V: As Fall has arrived it has brought back annual timing to listen to Drudkh, perfect music for this time of the year.

Also just listening to the latest SCUMRIPPER album! It's a total killer! (Yeah. -Ed.)

GA: The past month I've tried to listen through my LPs and I've already reached the letter B, and from what I've listened I can strongly recommend Autopsy, Beherit, Old Barathrum, Bestial Warlust's "Vengeance war till Death", Behexen's "By the Blessing of Satan" and Bauhaus' "In the Flat Fields".

Gatekeeper Ares, you used to publish Martial Arts zine, at least two issues were published during the pandemic period. What is the current state of that project? I got to say that I found that zine inspirational, as it was one of the torches to reignite my zinemaking flame again after a hiatus of several years, although that didn't exactly happen immediately after I got my hands on them. Nevertheless, it inspired me to start with a new zine, which evolved into Spectrum of Circles and I need to salute you for that.

GA: Cool to hear! And I have to return the compliment, as I have read your zines in the past. Martial Art zine was a product of the corona times, if you recall that era... As a somewhat hyperactive person I need to have something to do and zine making was something that I haven't had tried and had free time on my hands and they say that the idle hands are the Devil's workshop... I think they came up pretty decent, although I fucked up the contrasts in the second issue. I have been thinking of making a third one, but I guess gotta give myself a kick to the ass and get to work. (YES! -Ed.)

I'm done for the day. Feel free to voice your mind in case you feel there is something you wanted to say but didn't have the opportunity to do so. That's it. Thank you for the interview and all the be(a)st.

V: THANKS AND SPEED HAIL SATAN!!

GA: Thanks for the interrest! Go listen to Black Steel Vengeance now!

Just like Vitriolic, Chilean Mayhemic has sworn the oath of total thrashing madness... although their weapons might be somewhat different. Does Mayhemic use sticks and stones? They might, but they're very effective with them; "Toba" is one of my favorite album releases from 2024. Vile, old school thrash metal. Noctumbra, the maniac behind it all, gave us some answers.

Hello! How are you holding up?

Noctumbra: Hellish greetings from the end of the world!!!

Can you give the brief history of the band? I reckon that not all of our readers are familiar with the band.

Noctumbra: I started Mayhemic in 2014 with the idea of making thrash metal with more primitive influences and sounds than the other bands I was in at the time, however, I didn't manage to put together a stable line-up until 2018, with my move to drums and the addition of "Demian" and "Doom" to the band. That same year we recorded our demo "No Life" and the following year our EP "Mortuary Feast of Skeletons", which framed us in a series of live shows and deals with different record labels. After several line-up changes, we ended up consolidating ourselves with me on guitar, and between Doom and I we shared the vocal duties, premiering this new approach with our double single "The Last Judgement / Volcanic Blast" in 2020, where we also managed to sign with Sepulchral Voice Records. Under this alliance, we managed to publish our debut album "Toba" this year, 2024, in addition to completing a Bolivian tour and different presentations throughout Chile. Currently, the band is flaying the ears of all those maniac thrashers who dare to listen to our music !!!

You play vile thrash metal with a significant black metal touch. Above everything else, one of the most defining factors of Mayhemic's sound is the huge Kreator influence. Can you elaborate on your relationship with Kreator? How about other teutonic thrash metal bands? I mean, I can also hear the legacy of not only early Destruction and Sodom, but also some more obscure bands like Darkness and Poison.

Noctumbra: Kreator is my favorite band since ever!!! In fact, it was my fanaticism for the 84-86 Kreator era that motivated me to create the band (Pleasure to Kill is my fucking bible of how extreme metal should be done !!!!!!!!), as well as the classic German Thrash that uses a similar sound and style (albums like Obsessed by Cruelty, Necronomicon, Power of Darkness, etc...). Personally, I love bands like Darkness and Poison, but the truth is that their influence on Mayhemic's music has been rather minor compared to the more obvious references.

Do you feel that South American thrash / death metal has equally influenced you?

Noctumbra: Certain works by Brazilian bands were also big influences for Mayhemic!! Albums like Bestial Devastation, Morbid Visions, Abominable Anno Domini, INRI and Bloody Vengeance were a fundamental impulse in the creative aspect. Chilean bands like Armies and Warth also had a lot of influence on our music. It is also worth mentioning that the song "No Life" by the band Explicit Hate had something to do with the decision to name the debut demo like that.

"Toba" is your first full-length album. Your discography consists of demos, EPS and other shorter releases, and there was a gap between the split with Hellish, which was released in 2020... and here we are, four years later admiring "Toba". What's happened during those years? Did it all go to writing and recording "Toba"?

Noctumbra: The fucking pandemic daughter of the volcanic slut delayed us. The truth is that almost the entire album was already written in 2020, but given the restrictions caused by quarantines, the distance between the band members and the difficulties in coordinating rehearsals, we basically had to stop completely until 2022. That year we were able to resume, but we basically had to rehearse the album from scratch, since we had never rehearsed those songs before, not to mention that the recording and mixing process itself was quite long (it took us almost a full year). If the health contingency hadn't existed, I suppose we would have taken 2021 to record the album so that it would be released in 2022, but well...

How would you describe "Toba", music-wise?

Noctumbra: NEANDERTHAL THRASH METAL !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

How do you see Mayhemic has evolved during the course of it's existence? Are the songwriting principles still the same than on the day you wrote your first recordings?

Noctumbra: There have been several changes. At first,

the musical composition was rather spontaneous and intentionally careless... I remember that the song “Mayhemic” was composed in 5 minutes, and adding drums as a demo took me only a while, and the lyrics followed a similar way; I would choose a topic and try to write about it in the most aberrant way that came to my mind. Currently, and since our 2020 single, I do everything more premeditatedly, trying to choose concepts beforehand and thinking about the final work, for example, if I am going to compose a song for an album, I try to make each song fulfill a different task within that album. Still, the motivation remains the same... to make the most violent, fast and heavy Thrash Metal possible!!!!

I couldn’t help but notice the track ”Volcanic Blast” you already did years ago, that was also featured on the aforementioned Hellish split. It’s kind of ”last song” before the pause between the records... kind of prediction of things to come? Do you see that track as an important piece of Mayhemic history, given the fact all your other old songs are more in the traditional satanic / evil territory and that song particularly addresses the Toba eruption?

Noctumbra: I’m glad you noticed! Indeed, that song was a preview of what would be the debut album, because yes, we were thinking of re-recording Volcanic Blast for the album; in fact, it would be the song in charge of closing it, however, given the delays caused by the pandemic, I decided that it was too long to wait to release the album with remakes, so it was at some point in 2022 that I decided to compose the song “Toba”, which finally took its place; in fact, if you pay attention to the lyrics of this song, you will realize that it talks about the same thing as Volcanic Blast, only in this one I was able to expand more given the length of the song. Currently, Volcanic Blast is the song from our pre-album era that we perform the most live, and the bangers seem to like it as much as we do, so I imagine it will remain on the setlist for a long time.

I have to include Sepuchral Voice’s description of ”Toba’s” lyrical content here: ”Over 70,000 years ago, an event of horrific proportions brought earth's life to the edge of existing. Known as the Toba eruption, a monstruous supervolcano spat forth brimstone and fire and put the world under the fangs of a massive volcanic winter.” Yeah, that’s definitely a ”metal” topic. How did you ended up on that theme in the first place?

Noctumbra: I don’t remember anymore hahahahahaha. You see a lot of stuff on the internet these days. I guess at some point the volcano thing came to me and I became obsessed with it without realizing it. Also, I find the name “Toba” to be extremely powerful. On the other hand, I knew that death topics were the path I wanted to explore lyrically with Mayhemic, but I was already sick of writing shit about demons and cemeteries, it just bored me, and all this stuff about extinction, prehistoric super eruptions and primitive world really came to refresh me in this whole lyrical panorama.

I’m under the impression that ”Toba” is conceptual album. Are all the songs on the album related to that specific event?

Noctumbra: I also think that “Toba” is a concept album, but ironically, Toba is not the concept. The concept of the album is extinction; specifically, scenarios (hypothetical or proven) in which life (mostly human) was on the verge of extinction. For example, “Kollarbone Crushed Neanderthal” talks about the theory of Neanderthal genocide, “Hazardous Prowler” about the possibility of being hit by a large enough asteroid, among others. “Toba” is rather the protagonist of the album, and I chose it since, if it had happened as the most catastrophic scholars tell it, it was the event that brought the human species closest to extinction. Another candidate song for the title was “Extinction & Mystery,” which talks about the Permian-Triassic mass extinction, which was the largest of all, but at the time it happened there were no humans, which makes it much less immersive in my opinion.

You seem to have to have some lyrics about the human evolution. Neanderthals are quite common in Mayhemic lyrics, for an example. Also, the history of long gone civilizations and their decline seem common topics as well. For an example, ”Olduvai’s Lullaby” is a fine example of that. What actually fascinates you with these topics? Do you study them aside from Mayhemic purposes?

Noctumbra: I am quite fond of these topics and I am constantly looking for documentaries and popular science books that cover similar topics. I do this both for fun and to get inspiration for writing. “Olduvai’s Lullaby” is a special case; although it seems to be narrating a past event, it is actually talking about a hypothetical future !!! In this future, our civilization goes through a decline with no return due to the exhaustion of non-renewable resources, returning to living in previously known conditions, finally arriving at a culture based on gathering, nomadic life, wars based on stones and sticks, etc. I invite you to read about the “Olduvai theory”, which was what inspired me for that song, it is a fascinating topic.

I must admit that I’m no expert on Chilean history, mythology or folklore, my knowledge is limited to bare basics. Are there such lores and historical events you would see dealth within Mayhemic lyrics? I got the impression that your song ”The Last Judgement” is inspired by mythology?

Noctumbra: I haven’t really focused on Chilean culture for Mayhemic’s lyrics – maybe I will one day, but I doubt it will be anytime soon. “The Last Judgement” describes the “beast” from the Christian bible’s book of Revelation. It’s not a very original topic; when I wrote it, I was in creative limbo, deciding which direction I would focus Mayhemic’s lyrics on in the future; luckily, I followed the path of Volcanic Blast haha.

The cover art of ”Toba” is... intriguing. There’s not only skulls, spines, visions of death and volcanic eruption, but also mitochondria and human anatomy, all of which are linked to Toba eruption on a theoretical level. How did the cover art become to life? Was the vision clear from the start, and does the final outcome match perfectly with that vision?

Noctumbra: I had been very inspired by an illustration I found while researching the Permian-Triassic extinction (I really liked your questions, so I'll share it with you hahaha). By the time I had written a good part of the album, I realized that most of the concepts I was writing about were somehow related to that illustration, which I couldn't get out of my head for some reason. Eventually, I made a new sketch reinterpreting this image, with some distinctive elements, and giving much more prominence to the volcanoes. We talked to Bastián Velásquez (a talented artist and friend of the band, who also made the cover of our 2020 single) to make the cover based on the sketches I made, although I must say that he portrayed it in a slightly different way than I had planned, which shocked me a bit at first, but then ended up convincing me completely. Bastián really did an impeccable job and I feel that it was the best thing that he took some creative freedom.

How much you put effort into your lyrics? Do you think of them as just another instrument or should

you pay attention to them, as a listener?

Noctumbra: I think lyrics are no more or less important than anything else in music. I see them more as another tool to carry out your work, and like any tool, you can do a great job using them neatly, using them silly (but compensating with other tools, like instrumentality or even imagery) or even eliminating them altogether. For Mayhemic (from this album onwards) it is quite an important part of the composition and the final experience when enjoying our songs. As a listener, it is really varied. There are songs that you listen to and without fully understanding what it says, it invites you to read its lyrics well and immerse yourself in them. On the other hand, sometimes you listen to great songs and once you get to read the lyrics, you realize that you were better off not reading such crap hahahahaha. There are several bands that I listen to and enjoy that I've never really read the lyrics to, because with a few words that I understand I already know what I'm going to get, and sometimes I just don't feel like wasting my time.

What do you think of your older, more traditional extreme metal lyrics and themes? Do you see yourselves revisiting them?

Noctumbra: I am proud of what I have written. Every man is made by his story and back then, those lyrics represented a crazy and unbridled teenager who was angry with life, religion and the whole world. There are many things from those times that are still intact in me, but I don't think I would write about it again today; it would be redundant without any need to do so. I prefer to read the lyrics of "Prayers of Steel" by Avenger, which are at least funny haha (great album, by the way).

What do you think of metal bands covering these prehistorical topics and ancient quarrels? For an example, I do enjoy the Prehistoric Warcult.

Noctumbra: They are crap!!!!! Only Mayhemic can write about prehistoric events!!!!! (just kidding hehe). I have never heard Prehistoric War Cult, I guess I still have to listen to it.

I had an opportunity to buy either a CD version or LP version of "Toba". While I buy equally both of those formats, I tend to prefer CD nowadays... but perhaps it was the little voice in my head that commanded me to get "Toba" on vinyl. Do you see it more as a "CD" or a "LP" album, if you catch my drift? Does such stream of though even matter?

Noctumbra: Even though I really like the CD format, the truth is that I love to think of albums as divided into A and B sides, and in that sense, the Vinyl and Cassette formats work much better. I composed Toba with 8 songs thinking precisely about that, and that "Eschatological Symphony" was precisely the opening of the B side, so the most immersive option for that idea would be to choose the vinyl format, although I must say that I did not manage to exploit this potential enough as I would have liked. I hope to do better for the compositions that are coming for the second album.

Do you collect music on physical format? What recent purchases you have done lately?

Noctumbra: Yes, although I rarely go too far to get a record. Fortunately, there is a lot of movement here in terms of metal, and unless you are looking only for first editions, at any concert you can find various loot to take home, as well as material from high-level national bands. The last thing I got was a tape edition of "Aq' Ab' Al" by "Volahn", which I had been looking for a long time.

Do you listen to music digitally, as well? I, for one, collect music on physical format, but I don't personally overlook digital formats, either. I don't think those automatically rule each other out, but instead complement each other.

Noctumbra: I don't buy music in digital format, I consider myself more of a fan of digital piracy hahaha. It's quite practical and convenient to be able to have a lot of music on your devices and be able to listen to it whenever you want. In no way does it replace the physical format; I see this format simply for other purposes and for different situations, anyway, if I like something I discovered in digital format, sooner or later I will manage to add it to my collection in physical form.

What kind of music you've been listening to lately? Anything to recommend, especially from the Chilean scene?

Noctumbra: A lot of video game music, 16-bit music, and of course, a lot of Thrash Metal. My favorite Chilean band is Warth, but it's hard to listen to their best if you don't live here. I highly recommend Drencrom, Ripper, Demoniac, Necroripper, Critical Defiance and Necromantic Forces. I also recommend some of my other projects/bands hehe (Hellish, Parkcrest, Abreaktion).

Thank you for the interview. All the best!

Noctumbra: Thank you for the support!!! Drink a lot, fuck hard and wait for death !!!!!!!! AAAAAARRRRRRGGGGGGHHHHHH !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Greetings !
Noctumbra

Tyranny returns...

The terror continues...

Just when I got to share my thoughts on the Spectral Wound album, it turns out they are going to play in Finland in April 2025. How convenient. I might consider attendance.

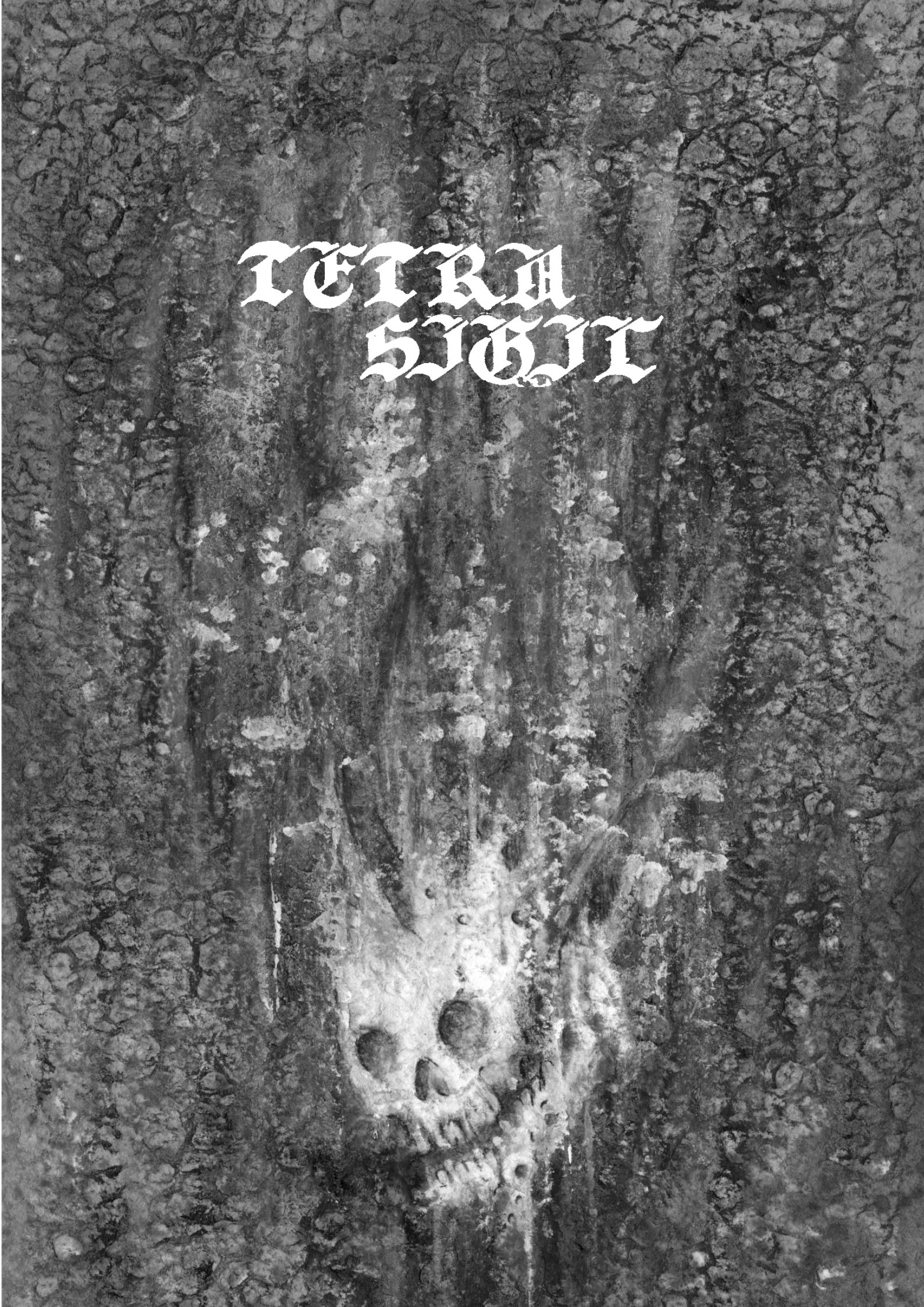
Speaking of visiting another countries, I visited Copenhagen in late November. That could have sparked my interest to give a spin to ”Den rædsomste nat” by **Ildskær** released in 2020 – one of my favorite albums released that year, actually. But even if I ended up purchasing three (!) copies of that album (hey, one in each format!), I didn’t actually got to listen to their ”Blod & Jern” album from 2023 until now. ”Paa dækket kalder de døde” EP they put out in 2021 was decent, but it lacked the charm and compelling songwriting that was present on the debut. You could say their take on black metal is heavily based on melodic and atmospheric approach, and ”Blod & Jern” is certainly giving even more emphasis on that end of the spectrum... and it seems that it requires more time to properly to get into than ”Den rædsomste nat”.

A few bands from Americas have gotten my attention. One of them was Mexican **Natzahu**, which published their album ”Under the Light” in late 2024. While that album certainly isn’t reinventing anything, it’s fairly well executed and contains many classic elements from the second wave of Norwegian black metal, Darkthrone and Immortal in particular. Sometimes stuff like that just resonates and is everything you need.

Brazilian **EvokeD**, on the other hand, is a whole different beast. Allegedly, their album ”Warfare of the Gods” is based on material written already in the mid-to-late 90s when the band was active for the first time, but wasn’t recorded until now. Mind you, this band is driven by a person who is a present-day member of Mystifier. You got to love those eerie keyboards and the sweaty soundscape of the album!

When it comes to extreme temperatures, I gave a spin to **Conifére** and their latest effort ”L'impôt du sang”. I tend to appreciate these bands from Quebec region and Conifére is certainly one of those bands with a touch of their own. A strong sense of melody, crisp production values and non-black metal influences coming from left and right. I’ve seen people namedropping different bands to describe Conifére at such a pace it’s almost exhausting or even disorderly, and I have to admit, that’s almost forbidding in my book.

”Forest Storm” is an album that was mentioned on the playlist of the previous issue. Indeed, that album is a fine example of burzumesque second wave black metal, possibly one of the better albums that came out in 2023. It certainly ”clicked” at the right moment while I wasn’t even listening to it. Now, we could proceed into talking about ”Forest Storm” and everything that is connected to the entity known as...


TETRA
SIGIL

Everything is connected, but on the other hand, it's not. The name Sagittariuz is perhaps the most connected with Tetrasigil, although he is also known as Luxixul Sumering Auter, thus known for his work with other black metal acts such as Aura Saturnal, Aeon Furnace, Frozen Graves and perhaps most notably with Cosmic Church. However, this interview has it's focus solely on Tetrasigil, but we also touched the themes of life, death, humanity and black metal, among other things. The exchange was realized in November 2024.

Greetings! First, what is Tetrasigil? Who, or what is behind it?

Greetings! Tetrasigil is a way to express myself creatively in a form of black metal without any specific limitations or restrictions. The name Tetrasigil was selected to symbolize the different ways one could describe life, death, universe, God, existence and non-existence in four symbols or sigils, starting from The Tetragrammaton, and then changing, inverting or even desecrating it. I am solely responsible for everything in Tetrasigil. As for "what" is behind it – everything and/or nothing.

Where do the origins of Tetrasigil lie? It's certainly not a new project, even if it's been lurking in the shadows for most of it's existence. What was the original intention of it, and has that intention – or mission – changed during the years? If I'm correct, Tetrasigil is around 15 years old as of 2024. Have you had to change your focus at some point?

Yes, you are correct. The Demo I MMXVI was recorded musically already in 2009 with vocals added on top in 2016 before the tape was released for a specific private event held back then. When looking back I guess the intention (or mission if you will) has remained the same since beginning even though times have changed and some other more "profilic" bands I've been involved in have been laid to rest during the years. I'd say the focus has also remained fairly similar.

You have been involved in a number of black metal bands and projects, some of which were active you started to operate with Tetrasigil. One could think that Tetrasigil was "just another" black metal to accompany the others like Asymmetry, Aura Saturnal and perhaps most importantly Cosmic Church, but I guess it served the greater purpose than to just make LSA discography a bit longer? All of those bands/projects I mentioned differ from each other, so was Tetrasigil a way to fill a gap those other entities could not fill?

In other bands you mentioned there has always been quite a strong focus on specific themes and topics I build the themes, lyrics and music around. Especially in Cosmic Church I operated until very strict "limitations" as the band was completely built around the religious work I was practicing at the time and was – at least for me personally – very much just a part of that work. Aura Saturnal was then some sort of opposite aspect of that same work as I needed that to balance out the things I was doing with Cosmic Church. CC was the light, AS was the darkness. Other bands such as Asymmetry I was only partially responsible for the creative work and more as a "supporting member" which obviously required me to participate in the actual creative work in less active ways and was involved to mostly just support the overall vision and goal of the band.

Tetrasigil on the other hand had no restrictions and still has none. I guess in a way it was sort of a channel or vessel for me just to create freely without having to align the band with any specific themes or topics or any higher sacred work. It was and is just pure creativity which flows freely and can take various forms if needed. The way it sounds as it sounds (which is quite close to Cosmic Church) is because making that kind of music is the most natural form of expression for me and comes out the most "fluently". If you listen closely you might notice that some of the riffs in the first demo were later reused in Ylistys of Cosmic Church and then when Cosmic Church was put to rest, some material which was never used ended up appearing in Forest Storm of Tetrasigil, so musically there was been some back and forth between these bands even though how I've approached them otherwise has been very different.

Even if Tetrasigil was formed all those years ago and the bands have coexisted, do you see current form Tetrasigil serving as a continuation to Cosmic Church, at least musically speaking? After all, some of the material you wrote for Cosmic Church ended up for "Forest Storm".

No, not really. Even though there are some musical similarities in the riffs, I don't consider Tetrasigil any sort of continuation of Cosmic Church. In CC there was way more complexity and layers in the songwriting process whereas in Tetrasigil the process is fairly straightforward and doesn't require nearly as much time and dedication for the songs and lyrics to come together. Cosmic Church was much more "grandiose" (if you will) compared to the fairly straightforward things done with Tetrasigil. Also the structures in the songs are different as many CC songs had a lot of different parts on the songs and their progression where in Tetrasigil the songs are often shorter, and much simpler their structure and arrangement.

How about on spiritual level? Does Tetrasigil hold such spiritual value as Cosmic Church did? At least you speak of religious work in a past tense.

The work I did for Cosmic Church fulfilled its purpose, and reached its end like it was planned in advance, and after that I had to go through something that you might call self-inflicted "spiritual death" to proceed onward with my journey. There were some really dark depths and torments that I had to go through in this process, but somehow I made it to the other side still holding at least some of my sanity and haven't being succumbed

completely to any demonic forces, and from that point on I had to build quite a big parts of my own being again from the beginning. So yes, Tetrasigil is definitely it's own thing, and what was existing during Cosmic Church has been transformed into something else, and there is no going back.

Given the fact Tetrasigil has always been there, but everything else around it is either buried by time and dust or changed considerably, do you think Tetrasigil is something that endures? Something that pierces your very existence but is something you can rely on?

I think it's hard to say, but as long as there's a need for it to exist, I don't see it going away. The thing with this band is that there's no pressure to really "achieve" anything which means that there is not really any pressure to also create anything unless it serves some purpose in that specific time and space. Maybe there will be multiple new Tetrasigil albums in the future, or maybe there won't. I don't think Tetrasigil holds more specific place for me compared to any other artistic endeavour I am involved in, it's just a specific channel for black metal. Cosmic Church was my "life's work" if you can say so. Once that work was completed everything else is quite meaningless in a grander scheme.

Do you consider Tetrasigil today as something that is completely free to transform into anything you could possibly desire in black metal context? Do you need any other personal projects to fill any possible gaps Tetrasigil could not satisfy, apart from those bands that you share with other people?

I have been thinking about that myself sometimes too. There's not really need to limit Tetrasigil into purely black metal in it's expression but I do tend to create new bands or projects around specific ideas or genres of music instead of transforming something to fit all my artistic needs. For example I have been doing power electronics and noise lately but I don't see myself releasing that material through Tetrasigil because I would rather just create new projects for these interests. It also allows me to create and maintain a specific distance and anonymity between these things. I am active in multiple genres of music but there is really no need whatsoever to connect all these projects and bands together in some internet database for example to boost some kind of ego trip. Anonymity, distance and self-alienation is more my cup of tea.

If we talk purely in black metal context: depends. But it would seem a bit weird to transform the band from one recording to another from, let's say Ildjarn styled raw simplicity into a symphonic or keyboard-driven black metal ala. Troll's Drep de kristne or Evilfeast, into more progressive and experiential style such as Dødheimsgard and then again going into full Blasphemy/Conqueror/Revenge style in the next release. I can see myself creating all of these things in the future if the stars align, but I don't think it would make any sense to release all of these recordings with Tetrasigil.

So, you're also into coherence when it comes to musical projects you are involved with? Keeping black metal as black metal and noise as noise?

Yes, I prefer that. Some bands have managed to transform their style still keeping it meaningful, logical and purposeful, but sometimes I feel like transforming the band too far from the initial idea and meaning feels like the band is just keeping the name for purposes which are have more to do with fame or being a "known name" instead of maintaining the vision. But to each their own. If I would try to just have one singular band for everything I create it would be a disaster, as I'm interested in so many different genres of music, both listening, creating and playing the music myself.

Speaking on coherence, do you feel that the recorded discography of Tetrasigil has followed a certain logic, a path or an idea that still seems valid to you?

I feel like Tetrasigil has followed a coherent and logical path. Obviously the production is completely different between the demo and LP but the riffs and songs are quite similar. Naturally some new inspirations have been taken as there was 10 years between making the songs for the demo and for the LP but the basic path and creative force has been coming from the same sources.

Thematically some changes have been happening for sure, as the earlier material was focused more on the "holy aspects" of nature and the world at their pure form and the later ideas have transformed into "weaponizing" that holiness into attack against humanity and human life in general. And that is the pathway I am going to continue forward as the themes I have for the upcoming release will circle around nature purifying itself from the cancer that is mankind.

Somehow that evolutionary path reminds me of Bob Marley's last three albums, which he intended as a trilogy; "Survival", "Uprising" and "Confrontation". I can see the same pattern and logic, even if the themes explored on those albums have nothing to do with those that Tetrasigil addresses.

That is an interesting observation and analogy! I'm not

very informed or familiar with the themes of Marley´s work beyond a very high-level knowledge and haven't listened to his albums, but I think the themes here fit quite well to what themes I have been using with Tetrasigil and how the band has been evolving throughout the years:

Survival, as a concept, has obviously been present in the spiritual turmoil I put myself through in the past and for sure is being reflected on the other concepts too. If I look in my own past, I consider pretty much my whole life as being mostly consisting in surviving one way or another. The way I see it, the whole concept of existence itself with self aware consciousness cannot be any other than survival once you fully awake into how painful and meaningless life is, as the mundane veil breaks taking away the blindfold of "human life". No wonder many people succumb themselves to some earthly or mythical fantasies trying to distract themselves into thinking their life has some value, here or beyond. Human life has no value whatsoever and neither are humans part of nature, we are "alien" parasites inside of it. We are the children of the false god who gave us consciousness, looked into his creation and killed himself when he saw what error he had made. The embrace of death is always tempting but the only way out of the eternal cycle is enlightenment, and the destruction of the ego and the universe.

Uprising and confrontation, then are very much present and continuation of survival. Once you realize the above, what do you do? Of course revolt, and declare war against god, the world, humanity, and embark on a conspiracy against the human race. And what is that conspiracy? That is for each to figure out on their own. I am not a brother, comrade, fellow or guide of any man. I stand against all who try to justify their own superiority as humans – every single human should be destroyed and all the existence of humanity erased from the memory of the universe.

As you said, the Demo was recorded as early as 2009, but the vocals weren't added until later on. Did those songs have lyrics or common themes in them when you intially wrote them?

Yes, I wrote the lyrics at the same time as I did the songs, so the themes were already existing back then. Atvar (who did vocals on the demo) then later modified those lyrics a bit before recording them in 2016.

There was a seven-year gap between the vocals and the rest of the instrumentation. Was that project abandoned before you decided to continue with it? What prompted you to work with that material again, apart from that certain private event looming in the horizon?

I don´t think the project was ever abandoned at least intentionally, and the plan was to originally release the tape at some point with my own private tape label Animus Absconditus but after doing 4-5 tapes (can´t remember exactly anymore) I just lost interest in doing more tapes and the demo was just put on hold as there was no pressure to release it whatsoever. I then later got into talks with Vermines Pestifera as this event was approaching and we decided to push this project over the finish line. I asked Atvar to do the vocals for it and it was released in 2016 along with some other tapes by Vermines Pestifera.

Thematically, how do you view "Forest Storm"? Is it about survival, uprising or confrontation, or all about all of them?

From these the themes Forest Storm circle around uprising and especially confrontation. Many songs are written specifically around the vision of upcoming destruction for mankind by the forces of nature as indicated in the lyrics for "Forest Storm", "Unsilent" and "A New Dawn" for example. In that vision, the hatred against mankind will result in an ultimate conflict, the final war, complete and total destruction of humanity. This is the cleansing that must be made as nature purifies itself and removes the tumor of humanity from within.

Then on the other hand songs "Chalice of Sorrow and Hatred" and "Contaminated" are quite different negative reflections on the nature of humans and humanity overall on both personal and collective level which I've gone through the years along the path of realization about the true nature of humanity. These songs also thematically go through certain aspects of confrontation from a specific angle, such as declining and refusing to produce offspring and ending your own bloodline intentionally and willfully through your own death.

Musically speaking, my first observation about "Forest Storm" was the odd sense of familiarity... this is despite the fact I hadn't listened to the album before that at all. There's this enchanting feel to it, and the first track is... catchy or even an earworm, if you don't mind the expression. That is something I never actually got from Cosmic Church albums, for an example. I'm not saying "Forest Storm" is better than anything else you have done before, just different... rooted more to the black metal fundamentals, perhaps?

The songwriting process was definitely inspired by some catchier albums from the 90's Norwegian black metal

albums such as Nemesis Divina by Satyricon and At the Heart of Winter by Immortal, and I think these influences are quite clearly heard in the album, which why it might be quite familiar in many ways? Catchy guitar riff driven songs basically. Cosmic Church often was definitely then more inspired by Burzum and other more atmospheric albums in comparison even though there were also some catchy riffs here and there. The goal of Tetrasigil is not really to be anything groundbreaking or new under the sun. Neither is most of the black metal I listen to myself either as I mostly enjoy black metal done with very basic ingredients but executed well, such as Tangorodrim, Pagan Hellfire, Judas Iscariot, Armagedda etc. Future Tetrasigil material might continue on this path or have different inspirations, time will tell.

Now that you mention it, I think I can hear the parallels with "Nemesis Divina" era Satyricon, and the song "Mother North" in particular. But if you ask me, reinventing the wheel was always kind of overrated aspect in black metal, or in any other genre to begin with. That's not something to be confused with the lack of originality, though?

I agree. As mentioned in some of my previous answers I'm mostly a fan of really basic things executed really well. I don't get tired of listening to similar things as long as there's that specific spark to elevate that material into something great. I do not really find that special something in many things though, and I'm stuck listening to the same albums which have that magic. Not that I have even been following modern black metal closely at all in recent years but every now and then I do check out some things and often there's nothing to grasp into. Which is fine, I'm quite pleased to keep the same old albums in rotation and then find something new to listen to only rarely. I do also listen to some original bands such as Dødheimsgard and Deathspell Omega every now and then but then I tend to gravitate towards the basic stuff and listen to Craft's Total Soul Rape or Terror Propaganda for the hundredth time. Also, these days I listen to black metal mostly and specific periods of time which come and go and rest of the time I listen to other genres of music.

I tend to think black metal is mostly about individuality, and I'm under the impression you didn't had to have almost anything else than life experience, and of course, we all live in this same world. But are there any specific writers, philosophers, thinkers etc. that have influenced your way of thinking or you have found a common ground with?

When I was younger and was practicing the previously mentioned religious work, I was much more influenced by other people and their writings and was active in those spiritual groups in many other ways too. When I then left them and chose isolation instead, that kind of influence stopped completely and was no way and form present in my life almost whatsoever for many many years and I was mostly just inside my own thoughts, not getting any external influences for a long time. Only very recently have I started reading and gathering influences again as I found common ground from some authors such as Peter Wessel Zapffe, Thomas Ligotti and Emil Cioran. It is not common to find people who think like me and embrace philosophical pessimism and misanthropy these days and ages (or maybe it never was?), but that is fine. Being alone and isolated has always been natural for me. And it is not like I'm a hermit who's separated from society on a daily basis, it's just that from a philosophical and fundamental standpoint almost no-one shares the same kind of thinking that I have.

What do you think is that spark or magic that makes some to stand out? You spoke about the execution, but is it always about that or anything else you can easily point out, the timing for an example?

That's a hard question to answer. I think it's a combination of multiple things, the music and riffs, production, atmosphere and the technical execution. I do think that a rougher production and being less practiced with your instruments has a higher chance of being interesting. Exactly the opposite of being really well produced, playing everything perfectly without mistakes, and putting everything in a nice package of modern generic studio metal. Not saying that being good at playing your instruments would always be a bad thing in itself, but there is a certain sound and style that makes a lot of modern black metal sound just generic and safe. Then you have bands like Concrete Winds for example who are amazing at their technical playing abilities, have a really good sound produced in a studio, but also have their own vision and approach, and look, the magic is definitely there. So there's not a singular answer to this I think.

I think that your preferences in old classics speaks volumes about black metal itself. I don't think it's possible for anyone to get even half of the picture what is catered to us within the black metal context. I also think that while people seem to publish just about everything, the bigger problem is the amount of decent, "okay" stuff that drowns in the mass. That also goes to every other forms of music as well, and that's also purely human issue to get "stuck" with your old favorites we all seem to go thru every now and then.

I think it also speaks volumes about me just getting old and more tired. I spent so many years listening to only black metal during my youth and went to great lengths to check out so many bands that I think I just burned out at some point just and decided to stick with the stuff I know is good and has value. Whenever I do have the energy to look into new stuff, I rather do it in some other genres I have less knowledge about to find still those gems to be found instead of delving into the sea of mediocrity.

Apart from the eradication of mankind, how do you see the themes of nature and forests are present in Tetrasigil, and "Forest Storm" in particular if you remove the human element out of them? Or in your way of life, in general?

Nature is a very much central piece in all of Tetrasigil creations, in all shapes and forms but mostly in relation to the holiness of nature. Nature is beautiful, sacred and full of meaningful existence that can never be embraced and truly understood by humanity as we are separated from it. However, Tetrasigil is trying to at least partially emulate that holiness and beauty of nature and its glory by actively trying to destroy the chains of humanity, ego, self and consciousness and becoming part of that everflowing stream of nature and universe through the death and destruction of these human elements and forming an union with nature, dissolving into it. As mentioned before, "Forest Storm" album is themed around nature finally unleashing vengeance towards humanity for all the centuries of abuse we have practiced against it in all means possible.

The forest god awakes and unleashes a storm that will end humanity and eradicate it from the planet. The cleansing must be made, indeed.

In my personal life I have made some actions and decisions which I feel like at least in small shape and form decrease the further misconduct and violation of nature, such as veganism. How people treat animals overall, how they see them and how they consume mutilated, mutated and tortured dead animal meat processed in the massive factories in the conveyor belts and delivered directly in your local supermarket fridges in nice packages so you can eat them still keeping your blindfold on and taking no responsibility whatsoever is a clear example of how twisted, corrupted and parasitic the human race is on this planet and this world. And this is obviously just a singular example of this behavior which is deeply rooted in the human race.

I have started dreaming again of moving somewhere deep into the forests, away from everything and distancing myself as much as possible from other humans in my daily life. We will see what happens.

Do you consider Tetrasigil lyrics having suicidal or depressive aspects in them, when it comes to those with their focus on individuals? Or in the ones with the collective point of view in them? At least I find more... acceptance in them more than self-destructive overtones.

Well, yes and no. I know the questions was about lyrics but I I think I need to make a thematic distinctions too as In general I think Tetrasigil as a whole is quite powerful and or even triumphant in comparison to many "depressive / suicidal" black metal, which is a genre filled with mostly useless garbage. Then on the other hand there are specific bands which use similar themes and atmosphere but execute that really well such as Luror, Kargvint, Klage etc. and with these kinds of black metal bands I do find similarities with.

If we talk about depression overall, then I'm no advocate for that theme in any way, or any other mental health problems in that case. These things have been present in my life and people I know one way or another throughout its entirety, but I consider them something that are a very obvious result of life and the "human condition" and the knowledge of life, death and existence and the error of human consciousness in nature we are trying to hide from and distract ourselves as much as possible in our daily lives. Some do it better than others, that sleepwalking through life and not ever waking up. No matter, depression is still a state which can be cured through various means. Sadness, melancholy, longing and other emotions are obviously present in Tetrasigil but so is hatred and happiness.

Suicide then on the other hand is an interesting topic. When you have seen the meaningless of life, this horror of being fully conscious and present and seeing the absolute repulsive mass of reanimated flesh that is the human race, what is the obvious choice? Suicide of course. However, throughout my years of spiritual and religious work I gathered some insights of the universal law and I do not believe that ending life with my own hand would end the whole existence of anything that I (or we) have ever been. And that is obviously the ultimate goal, leave the universe behind - become one with emptiness – become nothing. I do believe that energy transforms itself after death one way or another, whether that is some kind of rebirth or not I do not know. If I would have certainty that suicide would equal to complete and ultimate destruction of everything that was ever in any form or shape ever linked to my existence, I would do it right away. All my goals in life I've already filled, I am very happy and would end my life with a smile on my face. But as mentioned, I don't think it's that simple. Also, I have to confess that I really also want to see the world burn and I'm quite sure I will get to see that in one way or another if I live old enough.

Collectively or for other individuals then: If someone else chooses suicide, I completely understand that. The the ideal scenario would be a collective suicide of human race in a way where everyone would somehow understand that we need to end, would stop reproducing and then using the entire rest of their lives to undo humanity's errors and try to restore nature in it's balance without humans as best as possible, and then just going extinct and leaving the earth by death and unified suicide. Of course this is a complete and ridiculous fantasy as humans would never do that even in their wildest dreams. They are parasites, they must survive and reproduce and grow their horrible twisted mass of mutated flesh and corrupt and poison everything around them.

When it comes to self-destructiviness, I made an observation from the track "Chalice of Sorrow & Hatred"... is there a direct reference to Koskenkorva? No interview about Finnish metal about references to alcohol, it seems... but I doubt there's no "rakastan viinaa" aspect in that?

Indeed it is. I don't usually want to get deep into the meaning of the lyrics and instead let people reading find their own meaning from them, but I'll make an exception for this one as it's pretty interesting to talk about. The track and idea for the lyrics comes from the widely known (Finnish) tradition of killing your own family while intoxicated and then ending your own life after that aka. perhesurma or familicide. There´ something deeply interesting, fascinating and evocative in the fact that someone wants to end all traces of their bloodline and heritage in that manner, it´s almost ritualistic in that sense, this murder-suicide.

This piece of lyric was written in an interesting time in my life where I had to make a choice of either having kids or ending a long relationship with my then partner, and obviously the latter happened as the first one never will. So in a way the part "I refuse you" is also directed to my own potential children who I will never have, who will always be one with death instead of life. So in some symbolic way I felt going through this murder of my own family which would end in my own suicide as a katarsis. Lovely thought, isn't it! I guess we could also extend this thought process into murdering your own parents too, but I will leave that to the reader's imagination this time.

I had a long and difficult personal relationship with alcohol, but I'm pleased to say those drinking days are permanently in the past and have now already been for several years, but when writing this album that definitely wasn't the case. It's interesting to think of those times now as I don´t really regret anything anymore as going through all that, diving into the void of all-consuming alcohol and drug fueled darkness and madness was certainly a certain ritual of passage especially in hindsight. So yeah, not really a praise of boozing, that specific reference.

Well, I appreciate you opened up about that! I'm not going to reveal to our readers what that reference is, it is relatively easy to figure out. And as it turns out, those lyrics are easily accessible on the Internet and the album contains the lyric sheet as well. But since you do put some effort in them, how important part they are of Tetrasigil? Can you interpret them wrong and does such seem like violating their spirit? Have you ever considered of omitting them from the album release and instead prefer to mystery?

In comparison to my for in the past especially in Cosmic Church, making lyrics for Tetrasigil is quite straightforward and easy, and I'm not taking any pressure about them like as mentioned in some previous answers, the function of Tetrasigil is to be able to express myself without any limitations and/or (self-applied) guidelines. I also do not really worry about misinterpretations as does that really matter in the end? Lyrics are an essential part of black metal and I've never really thought about leaving them out from the releases. Even though there's no limitations in what kind of lyrics I can write for Tetrasigil, I need to be in a very specific mindset and state for that to happen, which is quite rare. I have zero lyrics prepared in advance for Tetrasigil and write them usually in a very short period after the music has been recorded already before recording the vocals, when I "provoke" myself into that specific mindset and might invoke specific forces to guide that process.

What kind of "provocation" you require to get into the proper mindset? Does it happen in similar fashion than it happened with Cosmic Church?

In a way yes, and no. In Cosmic Church there were specific magical workings in place to drive myself into being in a state where I could channel the music and lyrics into being, and I acted in a way or form as a kind of medium for energy to flow through me into something concrete. In Tetrasigil it's less magical in it´s nature but requires specific thought patterns to form and then driving my being into a specific state where the creation of lyrics is possible. Some sort of self-inflicted trance (or madness) if you will. That's all I think I can say about the subject.

How does the recording process with Tetrasigil work out? Does that require a specific time and place? How do you prepare for that task?

I'm a big fan of making things work no matter what´s the situation and I think it's always way more fascinating to just do things which are available in a specific time and place and work within those limitations, instead of having your own specific and familiar gear and setup figured out exactly in advance. That is why I often want to try out different places where I record my material, and this applies to other bands than just Tetrasigil. There's always that specific nice factor of uncertainty present when you just jump into somewhere, don´t know exactly what to expect and then just make it work in that situation, one way or another. So I would say the less there´s any sort of preparation, the better the process and result can be, at least for me. But in pure technicalities the process is always quite similar: Record drums somewhere where I just "play the songs" in my head while recording the drums and then just keep on addings instruments one by one until the record is complete. This can happen in a rehearsal room, studio, some bunker or storage space, my living room or whatever spaces are available at a specific time.

"Forest Storm" has a simple, yet effective album cover, and such artwork doesn't limit itself only to the front cover. The artwork is simple all the way, but it delivers the message. How important part the artwork is of the whole Tetrasigil "experience", if you pardon my choice of words?

Artwork is very important, it should visualize and capture the essence of the album. I spend a lot of time thinking in advance what I want for the cover of Forest Storm and gave the artist specific guidelines of what I want, but of course leaving artistic freedom in place. I was extremely pleased with how it turned out in the end. Like with the lyrics above, it is all about the whole "package", not just music. Lyrics, artwork and music form the whole "experience" together, as you put it.

The artwork was made by I.K. Inho. How did your collaboration worked out, and how did it start?

I've known her for quite a long time and liked some of the art she had created. I asked if she would like to create artwork for Forest Storm and we found an agreement. Everything worked really well.

When it comes to you, do you feel Tetrasigil in particular has a positive effect on your own well-being? Do you see Tetrasigil as a way to channel emotions, such as longing and sadness, that are purely human, and can such action prove to be a burden?

Yes, it definitely has. All art I create one way or another is mandatory for me to exist, as I need a way to process my thoughts and emotions into something creative. I did quit making all music for a while after Cosmic Church was buried, but that abstinence from creation certainly made the embrace of madness and death a really tempting option. So, to maintain my sanity, I need art and creation to have a part in my life. Luckily I am also doing different kinds of creative work as my profession which is also a way to process things into something that rises from the void

into being. So I see all of these things as a part of a whole.

All emotions are part of this, longing and sadness included. No matter how hard I would like not to be a human, that is a burden I have to carry and that includes these and other emotions. The only way to escape this is to become not-a-human through destruction of self and transcendence into the universal stream, and that is of course my only true objective.

Do you think such processing of emotions being just strictly personal or at least on some level following some even unwritten black metal principles, even if it's on subconscious level? These themes are not alien to black metal in general, not in musical, lyrical or even spiritual level.

Well, first of all, I don't care whatsoever about any unwritten black metal principles or rules. Even though the music I create is (and will be) black metal, I am almost in no contact with the current black metal scene, nor I wish to be. I don't go to any shows, I only communicate with only a few people involved in black metal and I do not follow what is going on. Most of black metal people are on equal level of being blindfolded worthless animated pieces of flesh, even through they consider themselves somewhat "superior" or "elite", which is a fucking joke. You could say I have special disgust for black metal people in general.

The work I do and process with Tetrasigil is being done just because I have benefits of doing it for myself.

Only rarely black metal musician truly is a hermit living completely outside society, even if black metal in general seems to embrace the idea. We all have names, addresses and social security numbers... but while I do appreciate the work Darkthrone has been doing for the past 20 years to demystify Darkthrone and themselves, while still retaining some distance between their daily lives and their black metal "persona", I guess part of the black metal's charm is it's distance from the rat race... and in your case, I think we are getting back to anonymity.

Black metal should be magical, otherworldly, spiritual, and far beyond anything humans or humanity does in their mundane and worthless daily lives. I only look for these aspects in black metal, any political or whatever bullshit message these current day idiots want to combine with their garbage "life metal" I have absolutely no interest in, and it clearly shows how little they ever understood the true essence of black metal. But what can you expect of these people?

Anonymity is important to me and I want to maintain it in all things related to black metal. I as a person have no meaning or worth in context of what is being done and processed through Tetrasigil. Demystification should not be done. No person matters. You do not matter.

Darkthrone then on the other hand for example lost their magic - if not already before - then at least finally around "The Cult is Alive" times when they chose to just be metalheads having fun and doing some worthless commentary tracks of their earlier albums and all kinds of things to make them feel as "normal" and mundane as possible. I choose to only listen to albums up until "Total Death" and just ignore everything they do after that because I do not care.

Speaking about black metal and individuals, how would you describe your relationship with Atvar? He already contributed to some Cosmic Church recordings and provided the vocals for the demo, but he clearly has faith in your vision to utilize his Kuunpalvelus label to publish "Forest Storm", as well.

We have been doing different collaborations since 2010 when Kuunpalvelus released Arcana Dei as a CD compilation all the way to this day. This includes playing in multiple bands together, recording, mixing, layouts, collaborations, guest performances in each other's albums, all sorts of co-operation throughout the years, and obviously Kuunpalvelus has released many of my albums and bands. I think our relationship has always been very simple and straightforward with mutual understanding and respect, as we share a quite similar view on how things should be done. This includes things such as having absolutely zero interest in any sort of "marketing" in any way or form, but just releasing the albums and not spending any time on any sort of self glorifying album description bullshit or whatever. Just call it "black metal", that's what it is. Keeping a low profile is a natural part of this co-operation and there was never any need to discuss this kind of direction, it was always just as it is. With Forest Storm I asked him if he wanted to do the album even though Kuunpalvelus was mostly hibernating, but he wanted to do it anyway so that's what happened. I will gladly release all my future albums with Kuunpalvelus until the end if he just wants to do them.

So, what is that new stuff you are looking into? You already referred to noise and power electronics earlier in this interview.

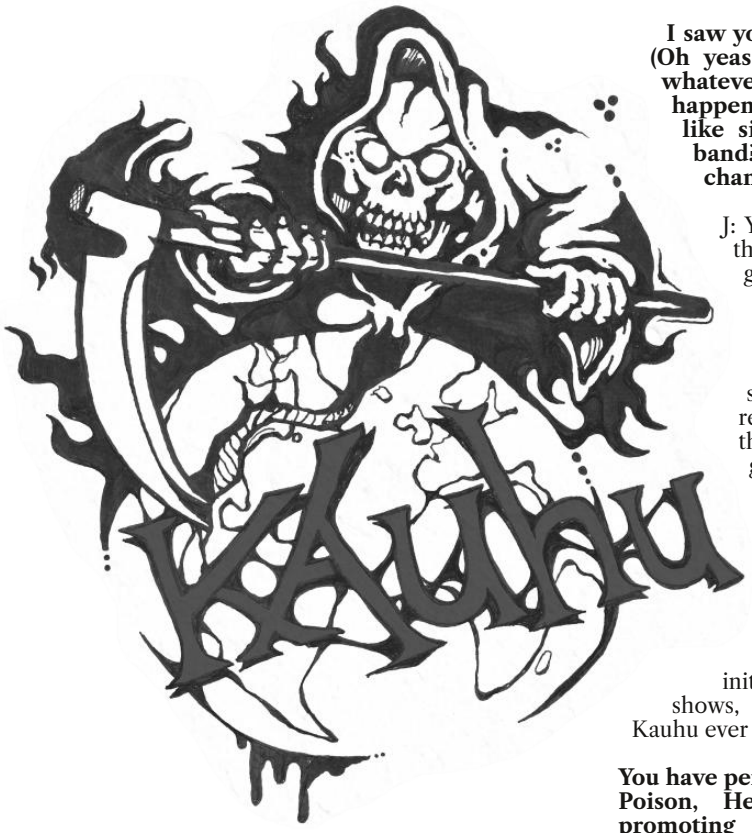
For the past 3-4 years I have been very interested in hardcore punk, powerviolence, noise rock, noise, power electronics and death metal. A bit earlier I was really into various electronic music and especially techno. So these things come and go in waves. I guess I can say I am interested in all kinds of obscure, weird, dark and impactful music and art overall.

What does the future look like when it comes to Tetrasigil? You already implied that the future might be uncertain ("Maybe there will be multiple new Tetrasigil albums in the future, or maybe there won't."). For some reason that reminded me of Reverend Bizarre and their plan of doing multiple albums, prior to their decision to end their existence sooner... not in a similar fashion, though, but in a way that you seem to acknowledge that everything is uncertain... and that everything comes and goes in waves, as well?

The immediate future for Tetrasigil will be a new split LP with songs I've actually been recording at the same time as answering these questions, but after that everything is uncertain. I think I need to wait for the right moment and inspiration to arrive to even start to think about the next possible thing. Doing things just by myself allows me to work on music quite freely and even now when I've moved my life to a completely new environment outside of any familiarities, I can work on Tetrasigil and other musical activities easily with just a very limited gear and equipment, which makes working on and recording new material very smooth in almost any environment. But yes, the inspiration comes and goes in waves, the "new" songs have been in the works in composition phase but remained unfinished for years until I got an inspiration to get them done about a month ago, and now everything is pretty much finished, so things happen quite fast when the time is right. We shall see.

Do you have anything else to say at this moment? Something you wanted to say? I salute you and I appreciate the interview. Thank you!

Thank you for the interview. I highly appreciate the time and thought you have put into your questions.



The horror, the horror... the name Kauhu literally translates to "the horror", and everyone can ponder whatever that means. Perhaps this interview can shed some light on the subject? But can it even give answer to this simple question; are they more metal than punk, or the other way around? They are not on Metal Archives, that's for sure!

Hello! First of all, what is the history of Kauhu?

J: Hell-o! There are three parts to the story. The first part, in which the concept of the band wasn't fully developed, dates back to around 2010-2012, when I discovered Voivod and Amebix. At that time, I was more interested in hardcore punk and wanted to create something similar. However, living in Seinäjoki without connections to actual suitable musicians meant that the idea of a real band never took off, and it eventually got shelved. Still, the foundation for it was built during that period, including riffs and some half-finished songs.

The second part begins around 2014, when I first heard Kohti Tuhoa's 7-inch release, which sparked my interest in working on Kauhu again. By then, I was living in Tampere, where it was easier to find musicians. I began jamming with the band's first drummer, Jupe. Unfortunately, this didn't go anywhere, as I ended up joining Jupe's other hardcore band, Epätoivo, which took most of my focus. Nonetheless, during this time, some songs were written, and the band name Kauhu was created.

The third part starts around 2018, when Niko (from Scumripper/Sonic Poison) moved to Tampere, and we decided to jam together something new. Initially, we tried playing some doom metal, but for some reason, playing slower stuff proved to be much harder than playing super-fast noise. So, the idea to revive the old corpse and play the kind of music we knew best began to take shape again. At the same time the band finally had third member when Risto joined in to play the bass.

I saw you live back in 2019. It's not too long ago (Oh yeas it was. -Ed.) when I was wondering whatever happened to Kauhu. So, what happened during that time period that seemed like silence for a lot of people outside the band? At least your lineup has faced some changes?

J: Yeah, in 2019 we recorded Anomalia during the same weekend when we played our first gig, which you are talking about. Anomalia was released in January 2020, and we managed to play two gigs with Swordwielder. Right after that the quarantine hit and everything went on a stasis. Niko moved to Lappeenranta so there really wasn't much interest to continue with the current lineup and I was more focused on getting the Sonic Poison LP done and working on Hekatoxen.

Somewhere around 2021 when the Hekatoxen EP was recorded and there was a bit of a writer's block going on and with two-thirds of Kauhu already involved in the band, we asked Saku would've liked to jam stuff with us. Most of our focus initially went to Hekatoxen as we began doing shows, but we have been gradually working on Kauhu ever since.

You have personnel known from such bands as Sonic Poison, Hekatoxen, Gray State etc. See, I'm promoting Kauhu with your other activities, as pretty much anyone else does too. How does that feel? Is it because those connections your first EP, "Anomalia", was published by Caligari Records from the US?

J: Thanks for the promotion, bro! I think it did have something to do with getting Anomalia released by Caligari. But some of Caligaris releases are pretty unorthodox so we fitted the bill quite well.

How would you describe the music of Kauhu? What were the main sources of inspiration when you started to stuff with the band? Are these inspiring elements actually audible in Kauhu? For fans of...?

J: Metalpunk nightmare. Voivod, Carnivore, Amebix have had a big influence. Not sure if last two are recognisable in our music, but Voivod is definitely audible for we like to use dissonant chords which the band is best known for.

You write your music in Finnish. How did you end up using Finnish in the first place? Do you find it challenging language to use? All I can say it's a somewhat unorthodox choice to use in this kind of music. Also, you other bands don't use Finnish.

J: It might have had something to do with bands like Painajainen and Kohti Tuhoa that we wanted to use the Finnish language, as our sound is quite punk, and it suited our style. We also wanted to challenge ourselves, as writing lyrics in Finnish is considerably more difficult than in English. You feel much more exposed when using your native language.

I absolutely love the band name... Kauhu... "The horror" in English. Short, striking name, that seems to have went largely unused by other Finnish bands (although I'm pretty sure some obscure 70s hard rock or "jytä" band that didn't get anywhere could have used the name, but that's just a wild guess) and seems to scare people (sic) enough for some not to even check the band. How did you ended up on the name

in the first place? Should people confront their fears when a band with a name clearly outside of their comfort zone sneaks up on you? Have you got any negative feedback concerning the name?

J: Honestly, I'm not sure where it originally came. Might have something to do with Voivods song called "Horror" or maybe Tribulation's album "The Horror". The feedback has been positive. Most of the comments have been "Huh! I never thought of it that way" or "It's pretty obvious, but never imagined it as a bands name".

Kauhu is on the fringe of hardcore punk and metal. Do you see Kauhu as a metal or punk band? Does it even matter? Not "punk" enough to be punk, not metal enough to be inducted into Metal Archives?

J: I'd say we're a crossover hybrid, built from all kinds of influences into this Frankenstein monsterrröööaaarrr, which only people with horrible taste in music could possibly enjoy.

The new EP is... well, it might be "new" as it was released in November 1st of 2024, but the songs are old. In fact, all of them appeared on your first EP "Anomalia", released by Caligari Records way back in 2020. There's no new songs at and all and you even went as far as removed two of the tracks from "Anomalia". So, it's practically re-recoreded "Anomalia" minus two. How did that happen, and most importantly, why? This is another unorthodox decision you have made as a band... And who those two particular songs?

J: Since Saku joined the band, the sound changed a bit, especially in terms of dynamics. When we jammed those old songs, they felt different (super-fast double kickdrums aargh!!) compared to the ones on Anomalia, so we decided to re-record them. The two songs, "Ei syytä paniikkiin" and "Korroosion laki", got left out because they didn't quite match the intensity of the other tracks.

Since you didn't record any new songs, people might be wondering if there are any new songs at all. What's the truth?

J: There are new songs made and more to come. Though not sure when it's their time to rise from the pits of horror.

I think that the music of Kauhu is horrendous... in good way, of course. There's some nasty vibe, perhaps the "horror element" in there, and even if I can't perfectly explain what that actually is, there's surely something. Perhaps it's the approach to song-writing, whispers and laughs, echoes, the presence of unexplainable evil... I think it everything it lacks is the infamous "Broadcasters laugh" we were all traumatized by when we were children... what do you think?

J: Here is a suiting text I found about the dissonant chord - "Like the Beast, it goes by many names: Diabolus in musica (devil in music), the devil's interval, the tritone, the triad and the flatted fifth. As its Latin moniker suggests, it's an evil sounding combination of notes that's designed to create a chilling or foreboding atmosphere." And I also liked that broadcasters laugh so no traumas for me.

How would you describe the lyrical content of Kauhu? Real-life horrors? Honestly, the vocals are shouted in a such manner I've had hard time trying to comprehend then, or even telling if they are actually in Finnish or not.

J: Being heavily influenced punk music the lyrics take a stance on social issues the worlds is being affected by. Of course, there are also personal topics that were inspired after spending some time in hell on a few occasions.

Do you think there's those horror elements in Kauhu you wanted to include there, both musical or lyrical? How do you actually implement them without them seeming too obvious or even pretentious? Do you feel you succeeded in that?

J: Yes, I think the music, and some of the lyrics, have some of those elements, even if the feel differs between them. However, I wouldn't necessarily call it just horror—it's more a feeling of despair, depth, or atmosphere that we try to evoke. I guess that side of influence comes from Amebix.

Not sure how the implementation part goes. If it feels right, then we go with it; if it doesn't, it needs some adjustment. With the songs we've made so far, we've been able to create something that doesn't haunt us for being too cringey.

What is your relation to Halloween? Do you celebrate it or do you refer to it as kekri as a Finnish person who dislikes Halloween would do? Or is it just a perfectly fine excuse to binge-watch scary movies or old Salatut elämät episodes? Do you prefer Helloween or Halloween?

J: Helloween sucks! Running wild is way better! There's not much celebration on my part, though I do enjoy the coming of autumn, as it offers a lot of inspiration and solace.

R: At first, I felt Halloween was just this Americanized thing to sell more plastic shit and whatnot. But know I am slowly warming up to the whole concept, as we don't have so many non-christian holidays in Finland. Although my "celebration" of it is pretty moderate, it's still nice to have something to look forward to in the darkest time of autumn. As said, a perfect time to enjoy some spooky stuff like horror films or King Diamond and eat some pumpkin soup.

I guess I'm too lazy and urbanized to celebrate Kekri, harvesting my crops from the supermarket. Leaving it to the country folks more in touch with their pagan soul.
Not a big Helloween guy either, couple of tracks.

S: I prefer pyhäinpäivä (I go to the graveyard all night long...) and also Keeper Of the Seven Keys 1 & 2 are some of the finest german music out there.

What do you think of the "horror punk" subgenre, apart from Misfits in case you consider them as such? I would be offended if someone categorized my band into that group.

J: I never really paid attention to the genre. I kinda felt the element of horror was just in the band's aesthetic—mostly in their clothing and lyrics, which leaned more toward fantasy than real-life horror. And the music itself was a bit too upbeat. But with Samhain, you can really hear and feel the darkness. Either way, the Misfits rule!

R: I think our lyrics deal more with facing the aforementioned real-life horrors of everyday life rather than slasher films so I wouldn't put that label on us. If somebody for some reason would choose to call us that I'm not offended. At least it has the words "kauhu" and "punk" in the title, so could be worse!

S: I don't even know what horror punk actually is, but I associate the term with many really influential and awesome bands like The Cramps, Misfits (both Danzig and Graves) and Samhain. Wikipedia says AFI is also

horror punk and I like their 90's stuff, so I guess I'm sort of a horror punk enjoyer myself. Kauhu is not horror punk.

I rewind this interview a bit and get back to the theme of silence... I mean, you were out of the picture for a good while, and many interpret such silence equaling death, and I confess that I'm not completely unbiased from that mindset, either. I guess it partly comes from the history of hardcore and short life expectancies of hardcore bands, but also this pressure to keep yourselves constantly on the "move" with live shows every now and then, a new recording every 1-2 years, frequent posts to social media etc. What do you think?

R: I think it's better to concentrate on quality not quantity. We'd rather release something worth a while even if it takes longer, than to rush things and release something we are not satisfied with. For example, Cold As Life were demoing the same songs that ended up on Born To Land Hard for almost ten years. I think the songs in Anomalia were written by Jussi throughout the 2010's, so if they still kickass you know they can stand the test of time.

Everybody was also busy with other bands and life in general, so I think that is just the main reasons for the silence. Dead but dreaming...

J: What he said. It never felt necessary to milk the band just to stay in touch with social media.

Alright. Do you have anything else to say? I salute you and thank you for the interview!

LISTEN TO VOIVOD!

Could these be the personnel of Kauhu? We just don't know.

Hall of fame of 2024

Black Funeral – Flames of Samūm
Brodequin – Harbinger of Woe
Cold Inside – The Waters Cease EP
Concrete Winds – S/t
Earhly Form – Crowned with Misery
Fellwinter – In Night's Eternal Grasp
Gray State – Under the Wheels of Progress
Hollow Woods - Like Twisted Bones of Fallen Giants
Kratti – Matka kohti kosmista
Mayhemic – Toba
Mogao - Tri-kàya
Muro – Nuevo Dogma
No Exceptions – The Line is Drawn EP
Spectral Voice – Sparagmos
Spectral Wound – Songs of Blood and Mire
Toadliquor – Back in the Hole
Unearthly Rites – Ecdysis
Valtatyhjiö – Kuristusleikki EP

The makers of...

TWISTED TOWER PRODUCTIONS